

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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R 251250Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4233

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 4939

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (ANTLES AND HAMMATT)

SUBJECT: W/W ANTLES AND HAMMATT

REF: A) STATE 089449 AND PREVIOUS

B) KHARTOUM 0882

1. SINCE OUR LAST REPORT (AA3754), FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE REPORTED A WEEK AGO THAT INVESTIGATOR IN SEARCH AREA HAD FOUND SEVERAL PEOPLE WHO HAD IDENTIFIED PICTURES OF YOUNG MEN AS FOREIGNERS WHO BOARDED EAL FLIGHT AT MOTA IN JAN OR FEB. MOTA, AS MENTIONED EARLIER, IS SMALL VILLAGE 50 MILES FROM POINT ON RIVER WHERE MEN WERE LAST SEEN. EMBASSY SENT LETTER TO EAL REQUESTING SEARCH OF THEIR PASSENGER MANIFESTS TO SEE IF MEN'S NAMES WERE LISTED. WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT SEARCH COMPLETED AND NAMES NOT REPEAT NOT PRESENT ON MANIFESTS. EMBASSY ORIGINALLY VIEWED REPORT WITH SOME SKEPTICISM AS FLIGHT FROM MOTA ONLY A SMALL LOCAL RUN AND THE MEN WOULD HAVE HAD TO RETURN TO ADDIS EVENTUALLY. TO DATE, NONE OF THEIR KNOWN CONTACTS IN ADDIS HAVE HEARD FROM THEM.

2. CONSUL MET WITH MAJOR ESHETE OF ADDIS CID AND WAS TOLD THAT ONLY NEW DEVELOPMENT IS DETENTION OF SEVERAL PEOPLE IN GONDAR FOR QUESTIONING RE MISSING MEN. MAJOR AGAIN GAVE ASSURANCES THAT ANY NEW INFORMATION WOULD BE PASSED TO EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY. MAJOR ALSO STATED QUOTE 99 PERCENT CHANCE THAT MEN HAVE MET WITH VIOLENCE UNQUOTE.

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3. DCM, DURING VISIT TO MIN INTERIOR YESTERDAY, RAISED SUBJECT OF MISSING MEN. MINISTER ASSURED HIM THAT INQUIRIES WOULD BE MADE TO BE CERTAIN THAT POLICE WERE DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO LOCATE MEN.

4. WE RECENTLY LEARNED THAT TWO PCVS IN BAHIR DAR TALKED WITH MEN BEFORE THEY EMBARKED ON TRIP AND ALSO RECOMMENDED AGAINST THEIR GOING. HEAD OF P.C. OFFICE HERE MET MEN ON SEPARATE OCCASION BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE FROM ADDIS AND REPORTS THAT THEY WERE DETERMINED TO PURSUE JOURNEY AS THEY HOPED TO WRITE A BOOK AND PERHAPS MAKE A FILM FROM EXPERIENCES.

5. EMBASSY IS HOLDING MAIL FOR BOTH MEN, SOME OF WHICH WAS TURNED OVER TO US BY PILOT WHO FLEW UNSUCCESSFUL SUPPLY DROP AND HAS SINCE DEPARTED ETHIOPIA PERMANENTLY. SWISS HOTEL IS STILL HOLDING BELONGINGS WHICH MEN LEFT BEHIND.

6. SOBEK RIVER EXPEDITION GROUP, SOME OF WHOM TALKED WITH MEN BEKB THEIR DEPARTURE FROM ADDIS, HAS SINCE DISBANDED AS RAINY SEASON BEGINNING HERE, AND MEMBERS HAVE LEFT COUNTRY. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HAS REQUESTED NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF MEMBERS WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR CLUES TO THE MEN'S WHEREABOUTS. AMERICAN GROUP MEMBERS NEVER FORMALLY REGISTERED WITH EMBASSY. CO-LEADER WAS JOHN YOST, SON OF AMBASSADOR ROBERT L. YOST. REQUEST DEPARTMENT EITHER OBTAIN JOHN YOST'S ADDRESS FROM FATHER, SO WE MAY PASS THIS TO ATTORNEY HERE, OR IF YOST IS IN D.C. AREA HE COULD BE QUESTIONED RE ADDITIONAL DETAILS HE MIGHT REMEMBER ABOUT THE MEN OR THEIR PLANS. CONSUL TALKED TO YOST BEFORE HE LEFT ADDIS AND HE HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN REPORTED. ONLY OTHER INDIVIDUAL WHOSE ADDRESS WE HAVE IS KAREN GREENWALD, WIDOW OF LEW GREENWALD, THE OTHER CO - LEADER OF SOBEK WHO DROWNED ON BLUE NILE IN JANUARY. WE ARE WRITING TO ASK HER IF SHE MET THE MEN WHEN SHE WAS HERE.

7. WE REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONTACT MARC ANTLES PER REF UNCLASSIFIED

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B AND BRING HIM UP TO DATE RE BROTHER'S DISAPPEARANCE PURSUANT TO REPORTS WE HAVE ALREADY SUBMITTED WHICH CONTAIN ALL INFO KNOWN TO US. THIS CASE HAS PROMPTED MYRIAD OF INQUIRIES WHICH WE DOING BEST TO ANSWER PROMPTLY. HOWEVER, SECOND CONSULAR POSITION CURRENTLY VACANT HERE, AND REMAINING OFFICER HAS EXTREMELY HEAVY WORKLOAD OF WHICH

THIS CASE ONLY SMALL PART. DEPT ASSISTANCE IN ANSWERING

QUERIES FROM U.S. WILL BE APPRECIATED.

8. FOR KHARTOUM: OUR PREVIOUS TELEGRAMS BEING REPEATED FOR YOU. THE MEN'S FAMILIES REPORTED THAT THEY HAD RECEIVED LETTERS SENT FROM EUROPE INDICATING THAT THE MEN INTENDED TO MAKE A FOUR MONTH BACK PACKING TRIP FROM ETHIOPIA INTO THE SUDAN. THEY PLANNED TO BE IN KHARTOUM BY MARCH OR APRIL AND WOULD CONTACT THE EMBASSY. UPON ARRIVING IN ETHIOPIA, THEY APPARENTLY CHANGED THEIR PLANS AND WE HAVE NO REPEAT NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT THEY ENTERED THE SUDAN. THEY TOLD EVERYONE HERE THAT THEY WERE GOING TO WALK FROM BAHIR DAR AT LAKE TANA, ALONG THE RIVER TO SHAFARTACK BRIDGE. THE MEAGER INFO WHICH WE HAVE VERIFIES THAT THEY MADE IT AS FAR SOUTH AS POINT NEAR MOTA. IF THEY LATER CHANGED THEIR MINDS AND DECIDED TO HEAD NORTH AGAIN, THEY DID NOT INFORM ANYONE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE.

HUMMEL

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